

Weather Forecast
Clear, warmer today; cold, low near 20 tonight. Cloudy, warmer tomorrow.
Temperatures today—Highest, 30, at 1:30 p.m.; lowest, 20, at 1:20 a.m. Yesterday—Highest, 31, at 4:50 p.m.; lowest, 17, at 7:59 a.m.
Late New York Markets, Page A-13

The Evening Star

WITH SUNDAY MORNING EDITION

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Russians Checked in All Areas Except East Prussia, Nazis Say; Rhine Cleared Below Strasbourg

German Report Soviet Attempt To Storm Oder

(Map on Page A-4.)

LONDON, Feb. 2.—Russian forces have made one attempt to storm across the Oder River in their onrush toward Berlin, a German broadcast said today, and other Berlin reports indicated Soviet patrols might already have crossed.

The German high command clamped a blackout on news from the sector as one military commentator told of the attempted crossing in the area of Kustrin, 40 miles east of Berlin.

Berlin radio accounts said Marshal Gregory Zhukov had brought up strong forces along the Oder on both sides of Frankfurt and that assaults to reduce the fortress of Kustrin were under way.

The German communiqué, however, completely omitting mention of the sector, said the Russians everywhere except in East Prussia had been checked after heavy fighting, and Moscow dispatches said Zhukov had run into thick minefields and a hard shell of German armor along the 90-mile front threatening the German capital.

Strong Barriers Claimed.
Declaring the capital could and would be defended, Hitler's paper said, "German armed forces are in a position to build barriers which the enemy, who has crossed the Oder with very small forces only, cannot even threaten."

Heavy fighting raged on a line from the area of Kustrin to the Oder 115 miles southwest of Berlin, to Kustrin, in the angle of the Oder and Warthe east and slightly north of Berlin.

There was no further report of the situation at Kustrin, where the Germans yesterday said the Russians drove into the point and reached the Oder just to the northwest in a sector 30 to 40 miles from the capital.

The Germans declared they had thrown the Russians out of Kustrin, and that thousands of German men, women and children had rushed to the east to dig a great system of trenches to make Berlin a "bloody disappointment" for the Russians.

Moscow dispatches reported, however, that Zhukov was working to bring up stronger forces, was massing his infantry and storm guns close behind his tank spearheads and that the "storming of the Oder is not too distant a project."

Although the Germans declared the Russians had been thrown out of Kustrin, they referred to it as the "first attack" and indicated strong Soviet forces might have been brought up for a full-scale assault.

Within Range of Guns.
This centuries old town, with its fortress built by Frederick the Great, was within range of the guns of the Russians for the second time in its history, Moscow accounts said. The Russians stormed it in the Seven Years' War.

The Russians now were inside Germany in Silesia, Brandenburg and Pomerania on a 375-mile front. But it was the Germans who told of the closest approach to Berlin.

By Moscow account these were the distances of the Red Army from these immediate objectives on the Berlin front:

Kustrin—About 11 miles, from the sector southwest of Duhrenhof. This would be about 51 miles from Berlin and the nearest approach yet reported in Moscow dispatches.

Zielentz, in the Warthe-Oder bend—4 to 5 miles, from the west of Gleisen. The Germans reported the Russians in the Zielentz area several days ago.

Sternberg, 7 miles south of Zielentz—10 to 15 miles, from west of Lagow. Furstenburg, on the Oder about 15 miles south of Frankfurt—about 20 miles, from the Griesel area.

Crossen, on the Oder 30 miles southeast of Frankfurt—9 miles from the Leitersdorf salient.

Moscow dispatches, however, said Soviet tanks had knifed between Zielentz and Sternberg.

(See RUSSIA, Page A-4.)

Army Combat Losses Now Put at 650,420

500,000 in U. S. Reassigned As Overseas Replacements Fit Men on Noncombat Duty Abroad Shifted To Infantry at Rate of 10,000 a Month

By NELSON M. SHEPHERD.

The Army has reassigned approximately 500,000 men from Army installations in this country and is in the process of sending them overseas as combat replacements, mostly for the infantry, Acting Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson disclosed today.

Mr. Patterson also revealed that physically fit men previously assigned to non-combat duties overseas are being converted to infantry at the rate of 10,000 men a month.

The acting secretary said the 500,000 men being sent as replacements include 50,000 trainees from the Army specialized training program, who have been assigned to the Army Ground Force, mainly for infantry, 90,000 men in other branches who volunteered for infantry and parachute organizations, and 80,000 transferred by direct order from other units.

Following Mr. Patterson's conference, War Department officers explained that there are now 3,000,000 troops in the United States, with 1,000,000 of them in "housekeeping units." These latter are either veterans of overseas service or men accepted for training.

Mr. Patterson, reviewing at a news conference the steps taken by the Army to provide overseas infantry replacements from its own sources, revealed that a total of 2,000,000 more men now in training in the United States are destined for overseas service—1,000,000 as replacements and another 1,000,000 in new tactical units.

The State Department, the Federal Communications Commission and the Office of War Information denied any knowledge of an armistice. OWI officials said they understood the rumor started in stock market circles in New York.

Excited citizens who had heard the report swarmed newspaper and press association offices with telephone calls seeking to establish its accuracy.

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Yanks Shelling Enemy Railroad Escape Bridge

BULLETIN.

PARIS (AP).—American and French troops at noon today broke into the northern end of Colmar, provincial French capital 40 miles south of Strasbourg. (The Paris radio later today said Colmar had been captured.)

PARIS, Feb. 2.—American and French troops today cleared 30 miles of the left bank of the Rhine below Strasbourg and laid a heavy artillery barrage on the Neufbrisch railroad escape bridge from less than a mile away.

In the center of the western front, the American 1st and 3d Armies probed deeper into the thinly manned Siegfried Line and advanced up to 2 miles in its fringes on the western slopes of the Eifel Mountains opposite the eroded Ardennes bulge.

Half a dozen German hamlets were taken; more lines of dragon teeth tank barriers were passed; scores of pillboxes—many undefended—were captured.

The passive German resistance in the center strengthened the suspicion that the enemy might be falling back to the Rhine, from 20 to 60 miles east of present battle lines in the center and north.

Other Advances Scored.
An announcement from Lt. Gen. Jacob L. Devers' 6th Army Group told of the victory below Strasbourg in an area manned until recently by 25,000 resolute German troops.

The threat to the Aislaun capital was all but dissipated, for gains also were made on the north, pushing the Germans to points about 15 miles away from Strasbourg.

The American 3d and 28th Divisions and French 1st Army troops fought to near Bischheim, a mile from Neufbrisch. There, one of the few standing Rhine railroad bridges to Breisach in Germany, protected by fortresses atop the 1,500-foot Kaiserstuhl Hill. The Rhine there is from 120 to 220 yards wide, 20 feet deep and steep banked.

Colmar, a town almost surrounded and Allied troops fought in its suburbs. The villages of Andolsheim, Widsenol, Arzheim, and Kuenheim, between Colmar and the Rhine, were captured. Colmar, capital of Haut-Rhin Province, lies 40 miles south of Strasbourg.

Counterattack Checked.
North of Strasbourg, Lt. Gen. Alexander M. Patch's 7th Army troops who fought across the Moselle River contained a German tank-supported counterattack inside Oberhofen. Another raiding force crossed the Moselle between Haguenau and Schweighouse and inflicted heavy losses.

Continued thaws slowed somewhat the 3d and 3d Army onslaughts along a 40-mile sector of the Siegfried line opposite the bulge. Despite their apparent weakness in the line, the Germans still were moving troops eastward and Allied air power late yesterday pounded Rhine bridges and railroads to disrupt the flow toward the eastern front.

The Americans widened their stand inside Germany by capturing Lautelsheim, 6 miles east of St. Vith and a little more than 7 miles from the heavily fortified rail center of Prüm.

The 3d Army advanced up to 2 miles inside Germany beyond the Hock River bend. St. Vith, capturing Hock River bend, Grosslagenfeld, Winterscheid and several other German hamlets west of Prüm.

The 1st and 82d Divisions of the 1st Army resumed their probing of the West Wall to the north, and found a few pillboxes manned. The 1st Division went through lines of dragon teeth barriers 4 miles east of Krinkelt. No Germans were found last night, but this morning mortar fire was encountered.

The 82d Division took Neuhof at the southern edge of Underdeath, a town in the line itself. The capture of Neuhof was a tactical gain.

Seven additional men from the District area have been reported killed in this war. See "On the Honor Roll," Page A-2.

(See PHILIPPINES, Page A-4.) (See WESTERN FRONT, Page A-5.)

Army Planning Prompt Return Of Liberated Luzon Prisoners

BULLETIN.

The Army plan for prompt return to the United States of the newly liberated American prisoners in the Philippines was reported today by Representative Philip B. Demer, of Massachusetts. He said he had been informed some of the men already are being prepared for return.

(List of Liberated Prisoners on Page A-2.)

By FRED HAMPSON.
Associated Press Staff Correspondent.
EVACUATION HOSPITAL, LUZON, Philippines, Feb. 2.—They want their health back. They want to see their folks. Then they want to come back and fight the Japanese.

Those are the prevailing sentiments of the 486 Americans and



Groundhog Day

Gas for Amusement Places Barred in D. C. and 10 States

WPB Issues 72-Hour Conservation Edict Effective Today

DISTRICT FOOD SUPPLIES held adequate as no embargo begins. Story on Page B-1.

Amusement places in the District of Columbia and 10 Central States were ordered abruptly to turn off all gas jets at 4 p.m. today if they use natural or mixed gas.

The ban, which does not apply to purely artificial gas, will remain in effect until 4 p.m. Monday or "until further notice," the War Production Board said.

Theaters, moving picture houses, night clubs, bars and other entertainment places are covered by the edict. The test of application of the ban is whether natural or mixed gas is used.

Appeal for Conservation.
The order was accompanied by an appeal to householders, schools and institutions to conserve gas.

Precipitated by Weather.
Precipitated by prolonged cold weather, the emergency action affects the District of Columbia, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Kentucky.

Senate Group Orders Hearing on Williams

McKellar Will Oppose Confirmation for Post As REA Administrator

The Senate Agriculture Committee today ordered open hearings beginning Tuesday on President Roosevelt's nomination of Aubrey Williams as rural electrification administrator.

Chairman Thomas said Mr. Williams would be the first witness and that Senator McKellar, Democrat of Tennessee, has asked to be heard in opposition to confirmation. Other witnesses probably will be heard, he added.

Old-line farm organizations are fighting confirmation and indications of opposition are increasing among both Democrats and Republicans.

With the nomination up before the committee, Chairman Thomas told reporters he would vote for Mr. Williams' confirmation "because I don't know anything against him," but would not take the lead in a fight to win it.

Similarly, Senator Bankhead said he favored confirmation but would not take the generalship in a battle against the opposition.

Before the committee session, Chairman Thomas said a letter received yesterday from the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange and the National Milk Producers' Federation.

The three organizations said that among the points raised were:

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George Bill Passage Virtually Clinches

Wallace Cabinet Post

Easy House Victory Seen For Measure Making RFC Independent Agency

BULLETIN.
The House Banking Committee indicated today that it will approve, virtually unanimously, the Senate-approved bill divorcing Federal lending agencies from the Commerce Department.

The committee decided tentatively to vote on the bill Monday or Tuesday without calling either Henry A. Wallace or Jesse Jones as witnesses.

The 10-day fight over the nomination of Henry A. Wallace to be Secretary of Commerce seemingly ended today, with the former Vice President virtually assured of a seat in the cabinet—and his foes successful in stripping the department of control over the Government's vast lending agencies.

Paving the way for quieting the storm stirred when President Roosevelt fired former Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones to make a place for Mr. Wallace, the Senate yesterday passed the George bill that will divorce the Reconstruction Finance Corp. and its affiliates from the Commerce Department, and then voted to defer action on the cabinet nomination until March 1.

The George bill was approved by a resounding 74-to-12 vote, and as it moved over to the House, Democratic leaders predicted easy passage there.

The measure once more would set up an independent loan agency, and big names in and out of the Government began to figure in speculation over an appointee to head it.

Vinson and Kennedy Mentioned.
In the list were Fred M. Vinson, economic stabilization director; Joseph P. Kennedy, former Ambassador to London; Marriner S. Eccles, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board; and Henry J. Kaiser, shipbuilder who was active in the fight to give Mr. Wallace the lending as well as the Commerce post.

Whomver President Roosevelt names will have to be confirmed by the Senate.

Mr. Wallace avoided losing the Commerce secretaryship when Mr. Joseph P. Kennedy, former Ambassador to London, was named to the post.

Mr. Wallace's appointment as Secretary of Commerce would be a major victory for the Senate in delaying action on the nomination and passing the bill by Senator George, Democrat of Georgia to divorce the financial from the trade supervising functions.

Too late for any practical effect in the Senate, President Roosevelt transmitted to Senator Barkley a message which said that if Congress chose to return the lending authority to the Federal Loan Agency he would approve the measure.

The Barkley forces already had beaten down, 43 to 41, an effort by the all-out Wallace opponents to force an immediate Senate vote on the bill.

(See WALLACE, Page A-5.)

U. S. Air Base in China Razed and Abandoned

CHUNGKING, Feb. 2.—The United States 14th Air Force base at Sutchwan, east of Japan's China-Indo-China corridor, has been destroyed and abandoned, American headquarters announced today.

The base was east of the Japanese "corridor of occupation" and southwest of Hengyang, the communiqué announced. It was destroyed January 24. Sutchwan is in Western Kiangsi, roughly midway between Hankow and Hong Kong.

The new Chinese Army spokesman, Maj. Gen. Kung Chi Kuang, denied that the Japanese, as claimed, had gained full control of the 685-mile Canton-Hankow railroad. He said fighting still was in progress at several points between Kungkuang, 125 miles north of Canton, and Chenhsien, 80 south of Hengyang.

May Bill Revised To Give Byrnes Job Control

Senate Committee Delays Final Action Until Tomorrow

By J. A. O'LEARY.

The Senate Military Affairs Committee today revised the limited national service bill passed by the House last night to give War Mobilization Director Byrnes control over the compulsory work features, instead of conferring that authority directly on local draft boards.

While Mr. Byrnes still would have discretion to delegate the authority to selective service, Chairman Thomas indicated the effect of the changes probably would be to leave labor recruiting in the hands of the War Manpower Commission.

The committee postponed a final vote on the amended measure to tomorrow, to 45 into war work until tomorrow when it is expected to adopt it then as it now stands.

Conference Battle Seen.
If the bill passes the Senate with these amendments, a battle may ensue in conference, since the House twice yesterday voted on the amendments designed to leave labor recruiting in the War Manpower Commission and to place more emphasis on volunteer methods than compulsion.

Senator Thomas told reporters, however, that all Government departments concerned in the subject suggested the amendments and that all have accepted them.

Indicating he would have some questions to ask at tomorrow's committee meeting about the effect of the amendments, Senator O'Mahoney, Democrat of Wyoming, inquired of Senator Thomas whether elimination of Selective Service as the agency to pick those who should change jobs meant that a new agency, requiring additional personnel, would have to be set up for that purpose.

Sees Bill as "Shot in Arm."
Senator Thomas said that phase was discussed and it was felt no new agency would have to be created. It was pointed out that the War Manpower Commission already has machinery in operation for voluntary labor recruiting. Senator Thomas said that if the volunteer system can produce the manpower needed, the compulsory features of the bill never would have to be used.

Senator Thomas, who has opposed compulsory national service legislation during the past two years, said he regards this measure as "a bill to produce that shot in the arm that may send our boys over to complete victory."

The compulsory work bill passed the House last night, 246 to 165. Overcoming the opposition to organizing labor and some spokesmen for industry, a combination of Democrats and Republicans steered the measure through without a single amendment.

A breakdown of the House vote showed 65 Republicans and 180 Democrats in favor of the bill. Lined up in opposition were 116 Republicans, 48 Democrats and 1 minor party member.

When the Senate committee convened this morning it already had before it a new draft of the bill, containing changes suggested by Government agencies and others since the House bill was written. Senators also had on their desks printed copies of briefs filed by interested groups within the last week, to aid them in reaching a quick decision.

(See MANPOWER, Page A-4.)

British Land Unopposed On Island Off Burma

SOUTHEAST ASIA COMMAND HEADQUARTERS, KANDY, Ceylon, Feb. 2.—Troops of the 15th Indian Corps have made an unopposed landing on the small island of Sagru Kyun off the West Burma coast southeast of Akyab. Allied headquarters announced today.

Sagru Kyun is off the southernmost tip of Ramree Island, about 120 miles south of Akyab. British forces recently made an unopposed landing on the north end of Ramree.

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(See WALLACE, Page A-5.)

Groundhog Saw Shadow Even if He Got Up Early

The groundhog saw his shadow today and if you believe the groundhog legend, you can expect six more weeks of winter.

The groundhog not only saw his shadow by daylight, but he might even have been frightened back into his underground bed before the sun came through the clouds this morning for the moon was shining during the latter part of the night when it was dark.

Ernest Ramsey, District weather forecaster, is inclined to scoff at the idea that a groundhog can do as accurate a job as the Weather Bureau. But he goes along with him this far: Winter is not going to end for at least five days.

The five-day forecast issued today calls for "some snow" early next week. The temperature is expected to rise, however, by the beginning of the week, and remain around 34 degrees.

Today's outlook is that the wind will quiet down with the mercury climbing to the upper 30s.

Bar Exam Results Are Announced

The names of the 80 candidates who passed the recent examination for admission to the District bar are published today on Page B-4.